

Capsule Summary
SM-478
Willow Tree Farm
Great Mills vicinity
Private

Circa 1890 - 1900

Willow Tree Farm is significant as a well-preserved example of a late nineteenth century St. Mary's County farm house. Located on a ridge in the landscape and bordered by a run that empties into the St. Mary's River, the historic setting of the dwelling is little changed. The traditionally mixed agricultural and residential use of this property is demonstrated by the series of seven outbuildings and the old tobacco field that share the corner lot with the house.

In 1893, Thomas J. Airey purchased six acres of "Willow Tree Farm" from Nannie M. Combs and Charlotte C. McSherry, residents of Washington, D.C. It is likely that they inherited the property as no deed is on record in the St. Mary's County Courthouse which transfers the property to them. Although it remains unclear when the Willow Tree Farm house was built, the architectural style of the structure suggests a construction date around the late nineteenth century. Thomas Airey's one hundred dollar purchase price for the six acre lot seems to suggest that the property was unimproved at the time of his purchase in 1893.

The six acre portion of Willow Tree Farm remained in the Airey family until 1932. At that time, one acre of the property was sold to George P. and Sarah M. Adams. George P. Adams, an oysterman and tobacco farmer, built many of the outbuildings on the property. The house remains in the Adams family today.

SM-478, Willow Tree Farm
St. Mary's County
Maryland Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Plan Data

Historic Context

Geographic Organization: Western Shore

Chronological/Developmental Period: Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870 - 1930.

Historic Period Theme: Architecture

Resource Type

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Rural

Historic Function and Use: Residence

Known Design Source: None

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. **SM 478**

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common **Willow Tree Farm**

2. Location

street & number **Route 5 and Willows Road**

☐ not for publication

city, town **Great Mills**

☒ vicinity of

congressional district **5**

state **Maryland**

county **St. Mary's**

3. Classification

Category

☐ district

☒ building(s)

☐ structure

☐ site

☐ object

Ownership

☐ public

☒ private

☐ both

Public Acquisition

☐ in process

☐ being considered

☒ not applicable

Status

☒ occupied

☐ unoccupied

☐ work in progress

Accessible

☒ yes: restricted

☐ yes: unrestricted

☐ no

Present Use

☐ agriculture

☐ commercial

☐ educational

☐ entertainment

☐ government

☐ industrial

☐ military

☐ museum

☐ park

☒ private residence

☐ religious

☐ scientific

☐ transportation

☐ other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name **George P. Adams**

street & number **Route 1 Box 384**

telephone no.: **(301) 863 2156**

city, town **Lexington Park**

state and zip code **Maryland**

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. **St. Mary's County Courthouse**

liber **MRB 560**

street & number

folio **238**

city, town **Leonardtown**

state **Maryland**

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date

☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

pository for survey records

city, town

state

7. Description

Survey No. SM 478

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Contributing Resource Count: 8

Willow Tree Farm is located on the northeast corner of the intersection of Willows Road and Route 5 near Great Mills in St. Mary's County, Maryland. A dwelling house and seven outbuildings are located on the property. The house faces a tobacco field and is bordered by woodland to the north. A run, known as Willows Run or Pembroke Run, is located to the east of the house. This stream crosses Route 5 and empties into the Eastern Branch of the St. Mary's River. The ell-shaped house faces south with the principal gable oriented on an east/west axis.

Built around 1890, Willow Tree Farm is a two-story, frame structure with a center hall, single pile plan. It is supported by brick piers that have been infilled with cinderblocks. The exterior is sheathed with weatherboard siding. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles.

The south (main) elevation is pierced by a modern entrance door flanked by one two-over-two sash window on either side. All of the original doors and windows on the house have wide, plain surrounds finished with an interior bead. A screened porch with a cement floor and wainscoted ceiling extends across the first floor of the house. The second floor is pierced by three two-over-two sash windows. A cross gable breaks the roofline of this elevation and is pierced by a two-over-two sash window. Two interior brick chimneys with corbelled caps project from the roof ridgeline. These chimneys flank the interior hall.

The west elevation is pierced by one two-over-two sash window on the first and second floor. The eave of this gable end is also pierced by a two-over-two sash window. The west longitudinal elevation of the eastern ell is pierced by a six-light-over-two-panel door. This door opens onto a one-story, shed-roofed, screened porch that extends along the west wall of the ell and the north wall of the main block. A window opening originally pierced the first floor of the wing as well. The second floor of the ell is pierced by two two-over-two sash windows. A cross gable dormer projects from the roof slope of this elevation. The dormer is pierced by a four-over-four sash window.

The north elevation of the main block is pierced by one two-over-two sash window on the first floor. Originally, a door also pierced this first floor elevation. The second floor is pierced by two two-over-two sash windows. The north elevation of the ell is a blind gable end. An interior brick chimney pierces the roof ridgeline at the north end of this wing.

The east elevation is pierced by a six-light-over-two-panel door and a pair of

8. Significance

Survey No. SM 478

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates ☐ known

Builder/Architect ☐ Unknown

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Willow Tree Farm is significant as a well-preserved example of a late nineteenth century St. Mary's County farm house. Located on a ridge in the landscape and bordered by a run that empties into the St. Mary's River, the historic setting of the dwelling is little changed. The traditionally mixed agricultural and residential use of this property is demonstrated by the series of seven outbuildings and the old tobacco field that share the corner lot with the house.

In 1893, Thomas J. Airey purchased six acres of "Willow Tree Farm" from Nannie M. Combs and Charlotte C. McSherry, residents of Washington, D.C. It is likely that they inherited the property as no deed is on record in the St. Mary's County Courthouse which transfers the property to them. Although it remains unclear when the Willow Tree Farm house was built, the architectural style of the structure suggests a construction date around the late nineteenth century. Thomas Airey's one hundred dollar purchase price for the six acre lot seems to suggest that the property was unimproved at the time of his purchase in 1893.

The six acre portion of Willow Tree Farm remained in the Airey family until 1932. At that time, one acre of the property was sold to George P. and Sarah M. Adams. George P. Adams, an oysterman and tobacco farmer, built many of the outbuildings on the property. The house remains in the Adams family today.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. **SM 478**

Adams, George Robert Personal Interview, January 1995

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 1 acreQuadrangle name St. Mary's CityQuadrangle scale 1:24 000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

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Zone Easting NorthingB

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Zone Easting NorthingC

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D

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E

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F

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth Hughes, Historic Sites Surveyororganization St. Mary's Co. Planning & Zoningdate January 1995

street & number

telephone (301) 475 4662city or town Leonardtownstate Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DHCP/DHCO
100 COMMUNITY COLLEGE
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032
(410) 761-1000

SM-478, Willow Tree Farm
St. Mary's County
7.1 Description

modern one-over-one sash windows on the first floor of the ell. The main block is pierced by one two-over-two sash window. The second floor is pierced by three two-over-two sash windows and one modern six-over-six sash window. Two gables break the roofline of this elevation. The southern gable of the main block is pierced by a two-over-two sash window. The northern gable of the ell is pierced by a four-over-four sash window.

The interior of the house consists of a central entrance hall flanked by a parlor and a dining room. Originally, a door at the north end of the hall opened onto the screened porch on the north side of the house. This access has been closed off and the space has been converted for use as a coat closet. An open string stair with turned balusters stands against the east wall of the hall. The kitchen is located in the first floor of the ell. As on the exterior, the interior windows and doors have wide and plain surrounds finished with an interior bead.

The second floor of the house consists of three bedrooms and a bathroom that was added sometime after 1932. The door frames have been decorated with faux graining. These door and window frames are finished both with an interior bead and corner blocks. An original two-panel door opens to a stair that leads to the attic. The door is fitted with a metal box lock.

Seven outbuildings are located on the Willow Tree Farm property. A frame meathouse is located closest to the house. This structure is supported by cinderblock piers and is sheathed with board and batten siding. The asphalt shingle roof is oriented on an east/west axis. The door, located on the west side of the structure, faces the side entrance door on the east elevation of the house.

A small cinderblock pump house and a frame shed are located to the northwest of the house. A frame corn house supported by wood piers, a tractor shed, and a tobacco barn stand northeast of the house. A larger tobacco barn, sheathed with vertical siding and roofed with metal, is located at the southwest corner of the property. The roof of this rectangular shaped structure is oriented on a north/south axis. A shed extends along the east side of the building. Both barns on the property continue to be used for the curing of tobacco.

SM-478, Willow Tree Farm
St. Mary's County
8.1 Significance

Chain of Title

TO: George Robert Adams and Betty Ann Davis
FROM: George P. Adams
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Records, Liber MRB 560, folio 238.
DATE: September 27, 1990.
NOTES: Transfer of 1 acre subject to a life estate.

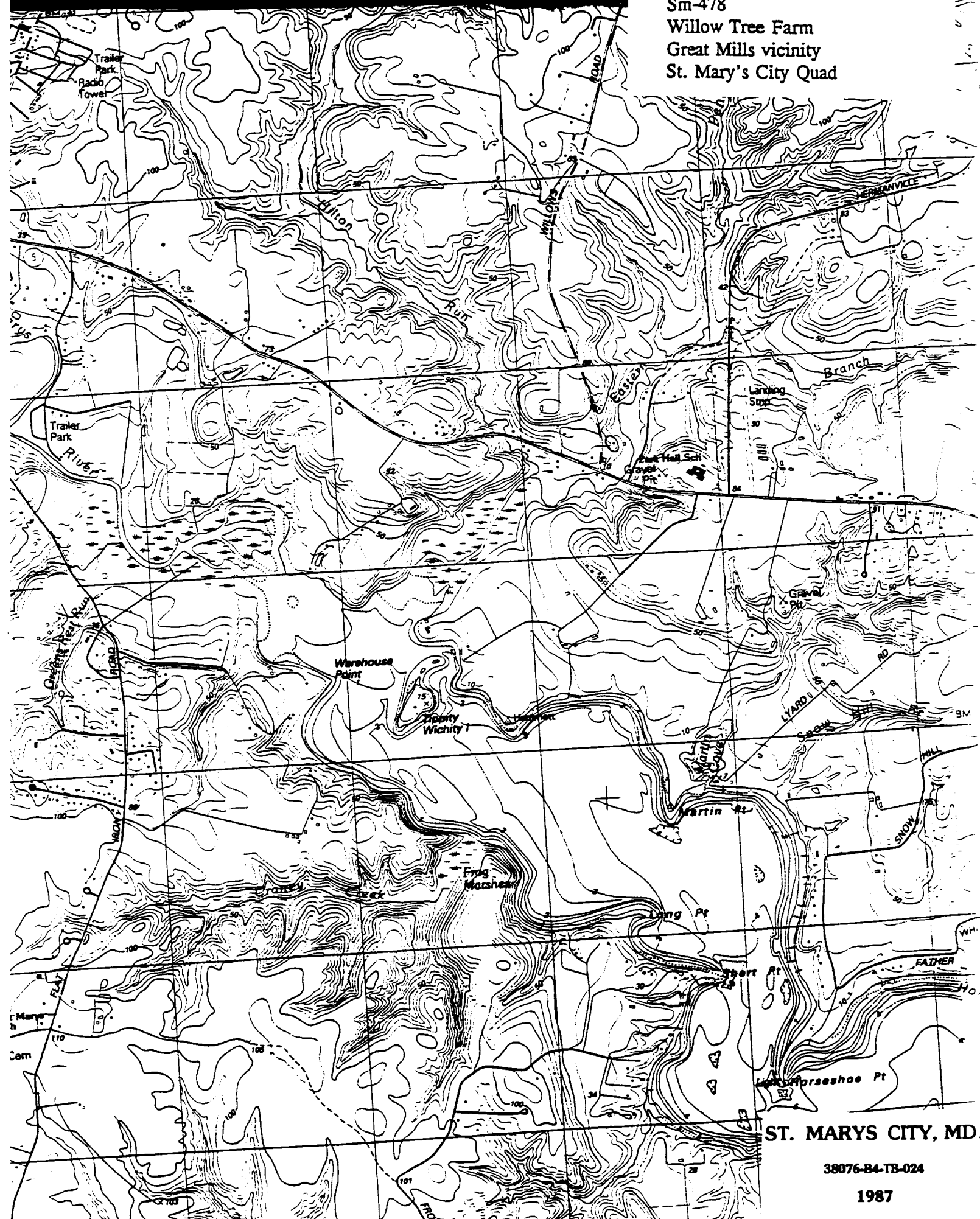
TO: George P. and Sarah M. Adams
FROM: R. Bennett Darnall, attorney
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Records, Liber JMM 8, folio 24.
DATE: May 16, 1932.
NOTES: Sale of 1 acre of "Willow Tree Farm" as result of default on mortgage (JMM 3/246).

TO: William F. Airey
FROM: Mary F. Airey, widow, of Baltimore City.
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber JMM 5, folio 191.
DATE: June 7, 1927.
NOTES: Transfer of part of "Willow Tree Farm" located south of the state road from Leonardtown to Point Lookout and being one acre.

TO: Mary F. Airey of Baltimore City
FROM: L. Allison Wilmer, Trustee
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber JMM 3, folio 522.
DATE: March 22, 1926.
NOTES: Thomas J. Airey died intestate in 1922. Sale of 6 acres of "Willow Tree Farm" as result of judgement in equity case Mary F. Airey et al vs. Bertha Bowles et al.
Price: \$2250

TO: Thomas J. Airey
FROM: Nannie M. Combs and Charlotte C. McSherry of Washington, D.C.
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber JJG 1, folio 226.
DATE: July 1, 1893.
NOTES: Transfer of 6 acres of "Willow Tree Farm." Price: \$100

Sm-478
Willow Tree Farm
Great Mills vicinity
St. Mary's City Quad



ST. MARYS CITY, MD.

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